

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAM-01 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

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FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3618

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 0669

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MILI PINS AO

SUBJECT: A PESSIMISTIC HIGH COMMISSIONER

1. WHILE DISCUSSING OFFICIAL RESIDENCE AND ENGLISH SCHOOL SECURITY PROBLEMS (SEPTTEL) WITH HIS NO. 2 MAN, COL GONCALVES REIBEIRO, HIGH COMMISSIONER CARDOSO JOINED US, COLLAPSED INTO A CHAIR, AND UNBURDENED HIMSELF OF THE FOLLOWING PESSIMISTIC REMARKS:

A. PORTUGAL, THE AZORES AND ANGOLA ARE LOST TO THE WEST. PERHAPS SPAIN WILL DO SOMETHING ABOUT PORTUGAL BUT IT'S UNLIKELY.

B. THE USSR AND THE US COULD SIT DOWN AND QUICKLY SETTLE THE ANGOLAN PROBLEM BUT APPARENTLY SOMEONE ISN'T WILLING.

C. ANGOLA IS STRATEGICALLY MORE IMPORTANT TO THE U.S. THAN VIETNAM WAS BUT WHILE THE U.S. WAS WILLING TO LOSE 40,000 (SIC) LIVES IN VIETNAM, IT'S NOT WILLING TO RISK EVEN ONE HERE.

D. DISAGREEING WITH MY OBSERVATION THAT IT IS FAVORABLE THAT AT LEAST THIS TIME THE FIGHTING IS OUTSIDE THE CITY, CARDOSO SAID THAT'S EVEN WORSE. HE NODDED ASSENT WHEN I SUGGESTED THE
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CITY IS AT LEAST TEMPORARILY CUT OFF FROM FOOD AND OTHER

SUPPLIES.

E. THE HC DISCLAIMED ANY DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF THE FIGHTING IN THE NORTH OR AROUND DONDO (LUANDA 0662).

2. CARDOSO AND GONCALVES REIBEIRO HAD JUST LEFT A DEFENSE COUNCIL MEETING WHICH FAILED TO INDUCE MPLA AND FNLA TO HALT THE FIGHTING. THE HC BLAMES MPLA AND CONSIDERS THIS, LIKE THE APRIL 28-MAY 1 ROUND, A COORDINATED MPLA OFFENSIVE.

3. MUOH LIKE DURING THE CABINDA MINI-COUP LAST NOVEMBER (LUANDA 945) CARDOSO IS OPERATING ON NERVOUS ENERGY AND LITTLE ELSE. HIS EYES ARE PUFFED ALMOST SHUT AND HIS SPEECH IS SLURRED. HE MAY BE DRINKING. THE MOOD IN THE PALACE IS ONE OF RESIGNATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE WORST. PERHAPS OMINOUSLY THE MILITARY OFFICERS USUALLY AROUND CARDOSO ARE ABSENT, ONLY A PARATROOP MAJOR, INCONGRUOUSLY IN DRESS UNIFORM, REMAINS. ALMOST NO GUARDS ARE LEFT. LIBERATION GROUP LEADERS APPEAR NOT TO BE IN THEIR OFFICES EITHER. (CARDOSO AND GONCALVES REIBEIRO WERE RELUCTANT FOR ME TO LEAVE, APPEARING TO WANT COMPANY. WHEN I LEFT THEY WERE BOTH STARING SILENTLY AT THE WALL.)

4. COMMENT: THERE IS NO EXAGGERATION IN THE ABOVE, HOWEVER EQUALLY LOW POINTS HAVE BEEN HIT PREVIOUSLY WITH RECOVERY

SOMEHOW FOLLOWING. WHAT IS WORRISOME THIS TIME IS THE STRONG POSSIBILITY THE PORTUGUESE OFFICERS ON THE DEFENSE COUNCIL HAVE CUT CARDOSO LOOSE, EITHER UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO SUPPORT HIS DESIRE TO ATTEMPT TO RESTORE ORDER. WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO GET MORE INFORMATION ON THIS QUESTION. SEPTTEL REPORTS CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION.

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